

Message Text

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56

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAB-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-10 IO-13 MC-02 SSM-05

AGR-10 EB-07 AID-05 /141 W

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R 191152Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5341

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

UNCLAS CAIRO 9709

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR F

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN PRESS ON LEBANON

1. CAIRO PRESS JULY 18-19 DEVOTED EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO
LEBANESE SITUATION FROM VARIETY OF ANGLES.

2. MILITARY: WITHOUT MUCH DETAIL, PRESS REPORTS HEAVY ACTION
IN BEIRUT COMMERCIAL AND HOTEL AREAS. TAL ZA'TAR SAID TO
BE UNDER SEVERE PRESSURE BUT GUMBURRIYA JULY 28 CARRIED
OPTIMISTIC STORY BY REPORTER WHO ALLEGEDLY HAS JUST
VISITED CAMP AND INTERVIEWED ITS COMMANDER. LATTER CLAIMS
55 FALANGIST/SYRIAN ATTACKS REPULSED AND DEFENDERS HAVE MOVED
TO OFFENSIVE. CAMP COMMANDER CITED AS SAYING TAL ZA'TAR
CAN CONTINUE RESISTANCE ALMOST INDEFINITELY. "WAR CRIMINAL"
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WILLIAM HADI, FALANGIST COMMANDER, SLAIN WHILE ADVANCING ON

SURRENDER FLAGS RAISED BY DEFENDERS AS RUSE.

3. SYRIANS: SYRIANS CONTROL 60 PERCENT OF LEBANON, ACCORDING TO GUMHURRIYA, AND HAVE REPORTEDLY CALLED UP RESERVES TO BEEF UP FORCES IN COUNTRY. THESE NOW PUT AT THREE DIVISIONS, INCLUDING ONE ARMORED DIVISION OF 450 TANKS. PRESS REPORTS FRESH SYRIAN TROOPS HAVE ALREADY ARRIVED IN LEBANON BUT ALSO PRINTS CONFLICTING STORY FROM KUWAITI DAILY AL WATAN CLAIMING SYRIANS HAVE BEGUN WITHDRAWALS FROM LEBANON TO IRAQI BORDER.

4. GUMHURRIYA ALSO FEATURED JUMBALTT ACCUSATION THAT SYRIANS HAVE CARRIED OFF ENTIRE GOLD SUPPLY OF LEBANESE CENTRAL BANK AND TRANSFERRED IT TO DAMASCUS TO HELP COVER PAYMENTS DEFICIT RESULTING FROM INVOLVEMENT IN LEBANON.

5. MARXIST WEEKLY ROSE AL-YUSUF DISPOSES OF ALL VILLAINS WITH FOLLOWING THREE TIDBITS:

A.
BIETS HAVE WARNED SARG THAT FAILURE TO "TAKE HANDS OFF" LEBANESE LEFTISTS WILL RESULT IN SUSPENSION OF ARMS DELIVERIES AND WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET ADVISORS;

B. SYRIA IS PREPARED TO SIGN AGREEMENT WITH US WHEREBY GOLAN TO BE RELINQUISHED IN RETURN FOR ANNEXATION OF TRIPOLI AND BEQAA VALLEY;

C. QADHAFI, IN PERSONAL LETTER TO ASAD, HAS OFFERED TO PLACE LIBYAN ARMY AT DISPOSAL OF SYRIA IF IT WISHED TO ANNEX LEBANON.

6. DIPLOMATIC: EGYPTIAN PM SALIM MET JULY 18 WITH DELEGATION OF LEBANESE "PROGRESSIVES" HEADED BY ABBAS KHALAF OF SOCIALIST PROGRESSIVE PARTY. REPORTS CONTAINED NO INFORMATION ON SUBSTANCE OF THESE TALKS.

7. ARAB LEAGUE'S AL-KHULI HAS VISITED DAMASCUS AND IS NOW IN BEIRUT FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH "ALL PARTIES" TO DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF AL RESOLUTIONS, WITH EMPHASIS ON SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN
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RECONCILIATION. ACCORDING TO PRESS, AL-KHULI WILL STAY ON IN LEBANON TO SUPERVISE DELIVERY OF FOOD AND MEDICINES FROM EGYPT.

3. ASSISTANCE: PRESS ANNOUNCED THAT GOE HAS SHIPPED 3,000 TONS OF FLOUR AS EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR PALESTINIANS AND LEFTISTS. EGYPTIAN MEDICAL TEAM OF EIGHT DOCTORS AND 13 NURSES REPORTEDLY ARRIVED IN BEIRUT WITH 12 TONS OF MEDICAL

SUPPLIES. PRESS ALSO REPORTS THAT "SPECIAL" EAST GERMAN AIRCRAFT ARRIVED CAIRO JULY 18 WITH MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR PLO.

9. VIEW FROM SANDY BOTTOM: AHRAH HAS RUMOR-LIKE REPORT THAT EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY IS PREPARING EVALUATION OF INTERNATIONAL SITUATION AFFECTING LEBANESE EVENTS. ANALYSIS SAID TO HINGE ON FOLLOWING "INFORMATION":

A. US DECISION TO WITHDRAW PRESIDENTIAL REPRESENTATIVE FROM LEBANON, "SUSPEND" EMBASSY IN BEIRUT AND ENCOURAGE AMERICANS AND OTHER FOREIGNERS TO LEAVE COUNTRY;

B. PALESTINIAN AND NATIONALIST (I.E. LEFTIST) DECISION TO CANCEL ARAFAT VISIT TO DAMASCUS;

C. SOVIET DECISION TO END MILITARY AID TO SYRIA.

10. TRIPARTITE SUMMIT: PRESS COVERAGE INDICATES THAT LEBANESE SITUATION ALSO FIGURES PROMINENTLY IN EGYTIAN-SUDANESE-SAUDI SUMMIT PRESENTLY UNDERWAY IN JIDDA. RADIO REPORTS GRAVE SAUDI CONCERN OVER CRISIS. SUGGESTS THAT SAUDIS BELIEVE SOLUTION DEPENDS ON SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN RECONCILIATION AND SEE NO WAY OUT OF CRISIS IF "PRESENT OPPORTUNITY" FOR SOLUTION NOT SEIZED.
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